6: Taylor E-5 (1930-1937) 1936
ST13 Callinago ST13

one another and try to pick up from a heap before them a given number 257
of nut shells in time to catch another they have just thrown in the air.
Story telling and the asking of conundrums are among their favorite 257
pastimes—so indeed they are those of their elders when these have 534
leisure, as at a wake or during a "prises." Some of the stories are
hashed-up versions of our own fairy lore and legend, while others have
a more local flavor. Here is one of the latter:

A little girl wanted to visit her Mère-rère (maternal grandmother), who lived 531¶
on the other side of a deep, wide river. When she reached its banks, she met a
woman whom she asked to carry her across. The woman—who was no other
than Maman d' l'Eau herself (Water-Mamma, protectress of all fish)—said she
would do so willingly were it not for fear of being betrayed. The little girl promised
secrecy and was borne to the other side. When she arrived at her grandmother's house everybody wanted to know who had helped her to cross the river.
At first she refused to tell, but on being pressed, finally gave the secret away.
Just before she set out for home her grandmother gave her three seeds, one of gombo
(or okra), one of pois (pea, perhaps the pois doux shade tree, *Inga laurina*), and
one of lavandre (*Hamelinsia caribbaea*, not our lavender), telling her to drop one
each time she heard the Feu-feu (sp. humming bird, smaller than that known as
millet) sing. When the girl had gone a little way, Feu-feu came flying over her
head and sang:

"Cassa-lissa bi-bi, cassa-lissa bi;
O-bi-o, qui trahit Maman d' l'Eau.
O-bi-o, qui trahit Maman d' l'Eau."

(N. B.—In Carib, cassa means purpose, bibi is the word of address
for mother.)

Thereupon the girl dropped the lavandre seed, which immediately grew into a
big bush whose blossom Feu-feu stopped to suck. Later, when the bird had caught
up with her and repeated its song, she dropped the gombo seed, and the same thing
happened again. By the time she got to the river she had dropped all three seeds,
but the humming bird was still far behind, busy with the flowers of the pois tree.
Maman d' l'Eau asked if she had been betrayed. The little girl said no, and was
carried across as before. She had reached the other bank safely, and was well on
her way home, when Feu-feu arrived at the river, singing his song, and alighted on
Maman d' l'Eau's outstretched hand. Maman d' l'Eau was so enraged with her
spy—for such the humming bird was—for his delay, that she seized and tore him
in four pieces.

Here, perhaps, is the explanation of a phrase I have heard used by one or two children, when they did not wish to go unaccompanied on some errand: "Feu-feu hé fai' moin perd'—the Feu-feu will lead me astray." Again:

A young man, *Lá*, falls in love with a beautiful girl, Lidba, who unfortunately is "mouneo," that is, deaf and dumb. Nevertheless he marries her. One day he goes to the woods to hunt. He kills many birds, but instead of bringing them home, he covers his body with their rotting carcasses. Malfini, the *manoffeiz* or West Indian hawk, flies to Lidba's hut and sings:

"Lidba, Lidba, *Lá* mourut en bois,
La-ji-vo-ka."

6: Taylor E-5 (1930-1937) 1938
ST13 Callinago ST13

539 Lidia perceives that something is wrong, and follows Maikol, who leads her to the woods and repeats his song. On reaching the place where Lá is lying, Maikol repeats the song a third time, and Lidia recovers her hearing and speech.

Or:

A newly married man notices that his wife habitually gets up and leaves the hut as soon as she supposes him to be asleep. He follows her secretly to the river, where, after singing the following incantation,

"Yantibo, my dear, my dear,
Yantibo;
Ma-ne-sing pa-lan-pang—pa malkouwou:
Salaiapp, salapp,"

she turns into a crabier (sp. egret) and flies away.

The next day he challenges his wife to a singing contest, and, when she declares she knows no more, repeats the above lines himself, whereupon the woman turns back into a crabier, flies onto the roof, and is shot by the husband.

(N. B.—Yan in the first line and lan in the third line would seem to be parts of the Carib verb, n-dé etc., I do, or say. Tibo is the pronominal suffix for thou.)

Another story, of which I have never been able to get a complete version, tells of a man who used to go to the house of a "zombie" (spirit) and sing:

Touk-tika touk, ankro-lah,
Mo-kotkoua, mo-kotkoua, li long long . . .

in order to make the spirits come out and dance. It appears he came to a bad end, poor fellow. Whether the words have a meaning or not I cannot say. Some say "mo-kik'ra" instead of "mo-koukoua."

The conundrums, common to most of the islands, are innumerable, and of the following order:

(What is it that) has no roots when it has leaves, and no leaves when it has roots?—(Answer) A sailing vessel.

A child that beats its mother?—(Answer) A pestle.

Water standing upright?—(Answer) Sugarcane.

● 536 Before asking a conundrum one must challenge with the words "Tim-tim," whereupon the challenged answers "bras chouse (bras sec)." Similarly, before starting out to tell a tale, it is usual to prefase the words "Cric crac."

557 In the water game called "Maman d' l'Eau," after the Fish-Mamma—a personage, by the way, whose reputed presence in certain pools at certain seasons still commands the very real respect of the grown-ups—the child who is "it" asks the others in turn whether they eat flesh or fish. Those who say flesh may go free, while the more daring spirits who reply "fish" must be caught, ducked, and devoured.

Tops and stilts are known and made on the reserve from local materials.

The black wax of the native wild stingless bee (miel sur) is used by children and others for modeling grotesque human and animal figures.

Out of six left-over strands of larouman, many children make a kind of fingerstall, which contracts and holds fast the finger unwarily in-